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STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

STAT TO : [redacted]

STAT FROM : [redacted]

DATE: 30 November 1961

SUBJECT: Report Re: Microfilming Records in the Agency Records Center

1. The sheer volume of 29,437 cu. ft. of records dictated that only a cursory examination of them would be practical in arriving at answers to [redacted] questions concerning the possibility of these records being microfilmed. In terms of individual sheets of paper 29,437 cu. ft. amounts to approximately 58 million. Based on my findings upon examining the records together with inspection of inventory cards describing the records and conferences with [redacted] employees I feel confident that the estimates contained herein below are reasonably accurate.

2. Answers to the specific questions asked by [redacted] are set forth below along with a discussion of facts and figures leading to the answers.

a. Is the material suitable for microfilming? This question is concerned only with the physical qualities of the records--not with the retention value of the material. It is estimated that approximately 27,000 cu. ft. could be microfilmed through the use of relatively high speed cameras. The remaining 2,500 cu. ft. consist of materials that do not lend themselves to microfilming, such as, IBM cards, sound belt recordings motion picture film, short lengths of microfilm, oversize documents, etc.

b. What would it cost to microfilm? The only type or method of filming considered here for such a large volume of records is that which calls for using the 16mm rotary high speed camera with both manual and automatic feed. Total costs for this method, including document preparation (removing fasteners, bindings, etc.), preparing indexing devices (substituting hand printed targets for drawer labels, divider and folder tabs, etc.), camera operation, film developing, film inspection, carton labelling, supervision and labor,

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materials and supplies would approximate $25 per cu. ft. or $675,000 for the complete job of 27,000 cu. ft. This is the least expensive method of microfilming available. Technically, microfilm produced by this method would be of good quality for projection viewing--virtually 100% legible provided all hard copy is legible. It would be satisfactory for the most part for obtaining enlarged paper prints by using manually operated enlargers or microfilm reader-printers. Due to a great range in density and a relatively low resolution quality it would not be generally suitable for high speed quantity printing on automatic enlargers.

c. Who would do the filming? The Agency does not begin to have the facilities required for a job of this magnitude. In terms of trained personnel, approx. 110 man years would be needed to complete this job not including personnel and facilities required to process 18,000 reels of film. Certainly, the job should be performed at a pace to keep ahead of net accretions

STAT [redacted] which have been averaging 10,000 cu. ft. per year for the past few years. Just to keep pace with accretions would require 40-45 full time employees. To complete the filming of 27,000 cu. ft. in one year by Agency personnel would require 112 employees including film processing personnel. Since the Agency would need to recruit and train these people for only a one-time operation, the entire recruiting and training costs must be added to the cost given in 2b, above. That cost of approximately $25 per cu. ft. is estimated to be what it would amout to if an outside contractor were hired to do the job. However, an outside contract would present a serious security problem as it would mean that from 60 to 120 contract employees would have to be amply cleared to handle the classified material involved. I would be inclined to recommend that the prepartion of the records for filming and inspection of the completed film be performed by Agency employees and the actual filming by contract employees. This would mean that only 15 to 20 contract employees would have to be cleared. Less training of personnel would be involved by adopting this course as almost any unskilled clerk could do the bulk of the job with no training. Contracting for the actual filming would obviate the need for selecting and training operators and for procuring a large amount of equipment for one-time use.

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d. What would be the cost of retrieval in terms of personnel and special equipment? This question is discussed with e below.

e. Where should the film be stored and serviced? It is recommended that the completed film reels be returned to the offices having prime interest in the records contained thereon. Probably the Area Records Officers should have physical custody of the reels. In the main, reference to the filmed records would be through use of microfilm readers. Very few readers in addition to those already available would be required--perhaps as many as 12 at a cost of about $10,000. The use of hard copy reproductions should be permitted only where clearly needed. Printed reproductions from the film would run from 5 to 12 cents per sheet depending on type of equipment used and straight run quantities. They could be produced on the spot with reader-printer equipment or through centralized facilities such as PSD/OL. The integrity of the various files or groups of records need not be disturbed. All documents would be filmed in the same order as they now exist and the present indexing arrangement for the hard copy files would hold for the microfilmed files. In my opinion microfilm will provide a satisfactory reference medium to these records if the Agency decides to film. Except for the very large initial cost I do not foresee much in the way of continuing costs for equipment nor the need for additional employees to service the film files.

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